

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

OUR COMPLAINTS POLICY:

We are committed to providing a high quality legal service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

Remember it does not cost you anything to make a complaint and if your matter has not finished then dealing with your complaint may not cause any disruption but if there is a risk of delay then we will let you know straight away.

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT

A report by a client that their expectations of what they consider to be a good service have not been met.

PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS

A complaint can also be made by a prospective client if we have:

- Unreasonably refused a service to a complainant;
- Persistently or unreasonably offered a service that the complainant does not want.

OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

If you have a complaint, you can consider contacting the person dealing with your matter. It may be that any issues can be dealt with informally. If you do not want to do this then you can ask for any communication to be passed to Mr John Goodman, our Client Care Director. He can be contacted by e-mail at jgoodman@ctwsolicitors.co.uk or by telephone by calling any of the telephone numbers that you have for any branch office.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT:

1. He will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and may ask you to confirm or explain the details set out. You can expect to receive his letter or email within five working days of him receiving your complaint. He will also record your complaint in our Central Register and open a separate file for your complaint. We will do this within three working days of receiving your complaint.
2. We will acknowledge your reply (if relevant) to our acknowledgment letter. You can expect to hear from Mr Goodman within five working days of your reply.
3. Mr Goodman will within five working days of receipt of full details of your complaint start his investigation. This will normally involve the following steps:-
 - i) the member of staff who acted for you will be approached and asked to prepare a reply to your complaint within ten working days.
 - ii) Mr Goodman will then examine their reply and the information in your complaint file and, if necessary, he will have a meeting with the member of staff who acted for you. This may take up to ten working days from receiving their reply and the file.
 - iii) If Mr Goodman feels it appropriate, in that it will assist this stage of the process, he will either invite you to meet with him and discuss your complaint or write to you and ask for clarification on any points that have arisen. He will do this within five working days of completing his enquiry.
 - iv) If a meeting does not take place or clarification is not requested, Mr Goodman will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include his suggestions for resolving the matter. He will do so within ten working days of completing his investigation.

Sometimes it may not be possible to adhere to these time limits due to illness, holidays or the firm's closure due to bank holidays. If this is the case then you will be contacted to confirm the delay and the reason or reasons for it.

- v) At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you can write to us again and we can then arrange for a review of our decision which will be dealt with by at least one other director of the firm who will review Mr Goodman's decision within ten working days.
- vi) We will let you know the result of the review within five working days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
- vii) If still unresolved at this stage, you may take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman, you will have to bring your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within 6 months of receiving a final response from us about your complaint and 6 years from the date of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint or alternatively 3 years from the date you should reasonably have known there are grounds for complaint (if the act/omission took place before 6 October 2010 or was more than 6 years ago).

The Legal Ombudsman can be contacted in writing at PO Box 6806 Wolverhampton WV1 9WJ; telephone number 0300 555 0333 and overseas on +44 121 245 3050; email:

enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk. The Legal Ombudsman Service is available to all members of the public and very small businesses, charities, clubs and trusts. The service is free of charge. If you have any doubt about your ability to use the Legal Ombudsman Service you should contact them direct.

Additional information in the event that we are unable to agree a solution with you in respect of your complaint:

If we have been unable to settle your complaint using our internal complaints process you have a right to complain to the Legal Ombudsman, an independent complaints body, established under the Legal Services Act 2007, that deals with legal services complaints. The contact details are given above.

Remember you have six months from the date of our final letter in which to complain to the Legal Ombudsman.

Alternative complaints bodies such as ProMediate (website: <http://www.promediate.co.uk/>) exist which are competent to deal with complaints about legal services should both you and our firm wish to use such a scheme.

Please note that we do not agree to use ProMediate.